

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss and to support the Enumerated Powers Act introduced by Congressman SHADEGG. The Enumerated Powers Act is most important to protect the tenth amendment. We understand that with the word "federalism."

People perhaps, though, are not so aware of where the concept of federalism originally came from. They think some brilliant founders got together in Philadelphia in 1789 and came up with the idea of federalism, but, in fact, that is not quite true.

The concept of federalism dates way, way back to 18 years after the arrival of the Pilgrims in the Plymouth Colony. It goes to the time when the State of Connecticut was being founded and a great preacher by the name of Hooker preached a series of sermons outlining how the government in Connecticut should be structured. Those sermons resulted in what was called then the "Fundamental Orders of Connecticut." And what it said was that Hartford had certain enumerated powers and of anything not specifically enumerated for Hartford to handle, the other towns would have those powers.

So it was that we started with the idea of federalism, that is, that there is only specific power granted to the central organizing authority, in this case the U.S. Constitution.

□ 1745

Now, the Enumerated Powers Act requires that all bills introduced in the U.S. Congress include a statement setting forth the specific constitutional authority under which the law is being enacted. It would, of course, enforce, then, the reexamination of the proper role of the national government and it will fundamentally alter the ever-expanding reach of the Federal Government. The Enumerated Powers Act requires scrutiny of the Federal Government to slow this reach, particularly in the sense that it will require that there be a properly cited constitutional authority to precede the legislation proposed.

Now, the Constitution gives the Federal Government only 18 specific enumerated powers. But ignoring the principles of Federalism in the Constitution, starting with FDR and continuing through LBJ's Great Society right down to the modern day, Congresses have displayed a willingness to ignore the 10th Amendment in order to greatly expand the Federal Government.

The size and scope of the national government has exploded over the last seven decades. Congress has created ineffective costly programs, incredible annual deficits and a huge debt exceeding \$7 trillion that will be passed only to our children and grandchildren. State and local governments are now dependent upon the Federal Government for funding, and the Feds now tamper with issues that are best understood by States and localities, with education and welfare reform being two cases in point.

I believe that Ronald Reagan had it right: "I have always felt that the nine most terrifying words in the English language are, 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help.'"

We need to uphold the entire Constitution, not just the parts we choose to use for our own ends.

UMBRAGE TAKEN AT COMMENTS REGARDING DEMISE OF VICE PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was watching television last night, I think it was the O'Reilly Show, I am not sure exactly, but I believe it was the Bill O'Reilly Show on Fox Network, and they had an excerpt of another show from which were taken some remarks by a well-known comedian and political advocate in which he was inferring that the country would be better off if the Vice President of the United States died. I took great umbrage at that. I was very, very upset about that, because Vice President CHENEY has been an outstanding servant of this country for a long, long time.

I had the pleasure of serving with Vice President CHENEY when he served in this body as the Republican whip. He worked very hard in the Ford administration as the chief of staff. I don't know that anybody has ever really been able to question his integrity, because he is a man of integrity, and he has been trying his best to assist the President of the United States in dealing with some very, very troubling issues, not the least of which are the war against terror and the war in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I won't mention the comedian, the political pundit, who made the remarks on television on HBO just recently, but I will just say that I think it is very, very bad taste for anyone to infer, even infer, that the Vice President of the United States, Mr. CHENEY, who has done such an outstanding job for this country over a long period of time, should be better off dead. That was the inference that was made. I think it was wrong, and I hope that doesn't happen in the future.

I may take issue with political leaders on the other side of the aisle, and I may very much in very severe ways disagree with them, but in no way would I ever indicate that they should be better off under the ground than on top of the ground, even though we have severe differences. And for anyone to infer that the Vice President should die really, really bothers me, especially in this time we are in, these very troubling times.

Vice President CHENEY is a great man. He has done an outstanding job for this country and he should be respected, even if you disagree with him.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening, as every Tuesday evening, I rise on behalf of the 43 member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition. We are a group of fiscally conservative Democrats that are doing our best to restore common sense and fiscal discipline to our Federal Government. Part of that is accountability.

This evening I am pleased to be joined by another gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. BERRY, from Arkansas's First Congressional District, as we talk about restoring not only common sense and fiscal discipline to our national government, but accountability to our Federal agencies.

Mr. Speaker, a week ago, Saturday, February 24, 2007, at about three in the afternoon, not one but two tornadoes devastated the rural delta county of Desha County. The county seat is Arkansas City. It was spared. McGehee was spared for the most part. But Dumas, a town of about 5,000 people, was hit, and hit hard, as you can see from this photo provided to me by Agnes Ross at the Dumas Clarion. This is what was left of the Fred's Dollar Store. My district director's dad was in the meat locker of the grocery store, Matt Butcher, next door, which was also destroyed. In fact, Mr. Speaker, 150 homes were either destroyed or